

BLACK BEAR BAITING:
FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA 2011
Amal Ajmi & Ken Steinnerd Fort Wainwright, Alaska
November 2011
USAG-AK FWA Natural Resources Report 2011

This supplement reports the 2011 spring black bear baiting season for Fort Wainwright. All data were collected from the Fort Wainwright spring black bear baiting harvest reports. Supplemental information was obtained from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

The spring black bear baiting harvest for the Tanana Flats Training Area (TFTA) and the Yukon Training Area (YTA) for 2011 and the preceding years is shown in Table 1. The 1997 and 1998 numbers incorporate bears taken by registered and unregistered hunters.

**TABLE 1: REPORTED SPRING BLACK BEAR BAITING HARVEST
1997-2011 FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA**

	YTA		TFTA		TOTALS		
YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS
2011	1	0	8	2	9	2	11
2010	0	0	9	2	9	2	11
2009	0	0	8	6	8	6	14
2008	3	0	4	1	7	1	8
2007	3	1	4	3	7	4	11
2006	0	3	1	4	1	7	8
2005	0	2	1	2	1	4	6**
2004	0	2	5	0	5	2	7
2003	5	0	1	2	6	2	8
2002	1	0	0	1	1	1	2
2001	3	2	4	6	7	8	15
2000	0	0	3	4	3	4	7
1999	3	1	9(5)	11(6)	12	12	24
1998	1	1	7	4	8	5	13
1997	5	5	4	3	9	8	17

* Numbers in parenthesis are bears taken by unregistered baiters. Source: ADF&G.

** One bear shot in YTA and not recovered.

2011 harvest of 11 black bears is the same as that reported in 2010. Twenty-six hunters registered bait stations in 2011, 9 in YTA and the remainder in TFTA. The total number of registered hunters and bait stands set up in 2011 is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: KNOWN HUNTING PRESSURE ON FORT WAINWRIGHT:
BLACK BEAR BAITING, 1997-2011**

Year	Number of registered baiters	Number of bait stands registered	Number of bait stands set up	Number of additional hunters using stands	Total number hunters/stands YTA	Total number hunters/stands TFTA
2011	26	33	28	1	8/8	21/20
2010	44	49	37	43	17/17	22/20
2009	27	28	28	5	9/9	20/19
2008	33	31	31	1	18/17	16/14
2007	36	39	37	1	24/24	11/13
2006	27	31	31	12	21/18	18/13
2005	31	36	35	27	38/21	20/14
2004	36	36	33	16	34/21	18/12
2003	50	53	46	22	55/38	17/8
2002	43	49	18	8	17/12	8/6
2001	84	98	72	38	71/42	29/30
2000	91	102	74	37	69/47	35/27
1999	86	91	79	23	73/53	33/26
1998	69	95	88	24	54/58	28/30
1997	86	117	107	5+	53/69	25/38

DISCUSSION

Information indicates that there was a decrease in both number of hunters and registered stands in YTA, but that hunter and registered stand numbers remained steady in TFTA during the 2011 season. Historically, TFTA bear baiters have comprised of Fairbanks civilian hunters, and 2011 information follows this trend. YTA has been utilized by both civilian and military hunters, and the decrease in YTA hunters may be the result of the changes in hunting regulations granting residential status to military personnel for black bear; affording soldiers the choice to hunt off military training lands and decreasing hunting pressure on YTA.

The information in this report is provided by known registered hunters. The 2011 data submitted in this report is complete and accurate to the best of current capabilities. In the past many hunters have failed to register bait stands on military lands with the Natural Resource office, and therefore, an accurate total number of hunters and bear taken over bait on military lands are not known prior to 2008. As a result, hunting pressure, and take on military lands prior to 2008 cannot be determined with any real exactitude.

In 2011, all but two bear baiters submitted a hunter harvest report. Twenty-six hunters registered bait stands and three of those registered baiters (11.5%) did not set up stands this year. A total of 29 people hunted over bait on Fort Wainwright. YTA hunters reported seeing black bear or their

sign once, and grizzly bears or their sign 5 times. Tanana Flats hunters reported seeing black bear or their sign 46 times and grizzly bears or their sign 7 times.

Harvest numbers for TFTA fall within current estimated sustainable harvest goals for black bears as reported by ADF&G (Seaton, 2008). YTA falls under GMU 20B; available information suggests that as a unit, harvests have exceeded the maximum sustainable exploitation rate for a number of years. However, ADF&G suggests that inaccuracies may exist in maximum harvest rate, and or density numbers, or that immigration rates from adjacent units are higher than expected. ADF&G will continue with current bag limits in GMU 20B (Seaton, 2008). Current bag limits are 3 black bears annually.

Fort Wainwright Natural Resources staff will continue to work with ADF&G to ensure sustainable harvest of black bears on the installation and surrounding lands.

LITERATURE CITED

Seaton, C.T. 2008. Units 20A, 20B, 20C, and 20F black bear management report. Pages 217-233 in P. Harper, editor. Black bear management report of survey and inventory activities 1 July 2004 – 30 June 2007. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Project 17.0. Juneau, Alaska.